1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

WAR AND WAR LEADERSHIP

COUP AND STATUS

Comanche war notions conformed to the general Plains pattern of raiding and coup-counting.[1] The raid might be made by a party of any size, from a single warrior up. The coup was an individual exploit, made in any contact with the enemy, *after* it had been socially recognized both as achieved in fact and as worthy of distinction; a rough equivalent of an official citation after a modern engagement, if such were undiluted by political considerations.

The life of the Comanche male centered around warfare and raiding. The main objectives were the taking of horses, the counting of coup, and the killing of enemies. Motives for horse-taking were two. Horses, as we have seen, were the important form of property accumulation; the man who had a large herd was wealthy; he could afford generosity to his friends and relatives; he harbored visiting guests from other tribes. Horses also gained him prestige for bravery and cleverness; the taking of horses under difficult conditions provided opportunity for exploits of valor. Such exploits made reputation. Horses gained by inheritance, gift, or breeding reflected the first value, but not the second (except as a carry-over). The killing of enemies was similar in that it led to prestige through accumulation of war honors; but it showed a more direct tribal function when vengeance for the death of a tribesman came in question—though tribal interest was not absent from horse-taking; to have your horses stolen was to be out-matched and shamed by the successful thief (an out-triber).

It required more bravery to hit an adversary with a spear or a war club than to pierce him with a bow-driven arrow or a gun-driven bullet. Thus striking an enemy gave ground for an honored coup, while long-distance killing did not. The how of the killing mattered more than the killing itself. A coup was more valued than a scalp, for, "Anybody could scalp a dead man." But the Comanche considered the removal of a scalp under fire as worthy of a coup. How much scalp the Comanche took depended on how hot the circumstances were. He preferred to take the whole scalp, but if he was pressed for time he seized only what he could get. Scalps were used in the Victory Dance and were desirable as fringe decoration for shirts and shields.

In the foregoing, and in the following, the legal analysis is deliberately pushed further than the Comanche would consciously push it. In any

[1] Cf. George Bird Grinnell, *Coup and Scalp Among the Plains Indians* (American Anthropologist, vol. 12, 1910), pp. 296–310.

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"When the boy did these things the people wondered, but it was as his father had told him. 624

"A couple of nights later they set a camp, and the leader put a scout upon the hill to look for enemies. When he got there he saw two tipis on the other side. He turned back and came zig-zagging down the hill. When the war party saw him making the signal, the fighters ran for their horses, grabbing their spears and stringing their bows. The scout came in to report to the chief. He had seen two men returning to the tipis; it seemed as though they had seen him as he turned to leave the hill-top. 624 726

"The mounted warriors were off in a pell-mell rush about the hill. They came out there in the open. Yes! There they went. Three families of the enemy were scudding away in flight—like rabbits. The women were in front. The three men were riding behind them to cover their flight. Down on them the Comanches rode. One of the enemies had a fast horse. He circled back and forth trying to keep off the Comanches. Around he came. The boy on his war pony drove at him, his spear in hand. The enemy fell from his horse dead. The other two jumped from their horses; they began shooting with guns. The young Comanche turned his pony on them; in an instant he speared them both. It was over like that. He turned then and looked about. There were the dead enemies. Way back, the Comanches were coming strung out in a line. The fast ones were ahead, but his pony had left them far behind. The first man up hit all the victims and cried, '*aké*.' The others came and took the scalps.

"It had been a successful raid, so they all turned back to the main camp. When they got there, the people held a scalp dance. On the next morning some fine young maidens dressed up like warriors. They went over to the young brave's tipi before he was awake. They did the Shakedown Dance there and sang the songs. The boy's father came out. He knew what they were there for. He was proud of his son, so he gave these girls what they wanted. He gave them two horses. 624 727

"The next time the boy went with a war party he was its leader. They were going west. When they got to the enemy territory he got on his pony and worked it as he had before. After a while they came face to face with a party of Utes out looking for trouble, as they were. There was pause while the two lines stood facing each other. 624 726

"Then the boy rode out alone, circling before the waiting Utes. The Ute chief came out and chased him back.

" 'Now,' said the youth to one of his followers, 'you do as I have just done.' Then he waited. When the Ute chief came chasing that Comanche, the young leader dashed down on him and killed him with his spear. That was his strategy. With a yell, he rode straight into the rest of the Utes. He killed two more of them—like lightning. When his fighters saw his brave example they followed him in. The Utes broke and fled. It was too much for them. Our people chased them a long way. Lots of them were killed, but the rest got away. After a while when the Comanches got tired they turned back. They scalped the dead bodies of the enemy and took what they wanted besides.

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624 727 "The people were pleased when they got back to the camp with their great deeds. They had a big Victory Dance, celebrating almost until morning. The young girls came again to give a Shakedown Dance; the boy's father gave them three horses.

"Later on the warriors gave a Horse Dance. It was a sign they were going on a [726] raid. The boy was with them. This time they had a battle with the Osages. The enemy had three chiefs to lead them; they were out in front, so the young boy charged, killing them all. A regular dog fight followed. But the Osages were without their chiefs, so they could not last very long. When it was over the Comanches cut off the roaches of the Osages for scalps.

"The people gave dances just as before. This time the boy's father gave away four horses. Three years had passed. The boy was now a young man of great renown. He was a mighty fighter, a killer of chiefs.

624 "The wearers of the war bonnets held a meeting about him. They talked about the famous things he had done. It was decided the young man should be raised to the status of war chief.

"They got ready and set up a buffalo hide tipi, painted over with white clay. The people knew they were going to make a war chief of the young man. He was only nineteen years old, but he was very brave.

"They laid buffalo robes and blankets on the smooth floor for the warriors to sit upon; all was ready.

"The wearers of war bonnets were first to enter. The bravest went in first; the others followed after. They turned to the left as they passed through the entrance, walking all the way about the tipi until the first one came to the place at the right side of the door. They came in until they lined the edge of the floor. The leader sat at the west side. Then they waited for the young man.

"When his turn came he went through the door of the tipi and walked to the left until he came to a vacant space at the side of the leader. The leader got up to address the warriors. He repeated everything the brave had done, closing his speech with these words, 'This young man has done enough brave deeds. He is honorable and brave. He shall be one of us. He is as brave as any of us and we make him one of us. What is more, I honor him ahead of myself. Hereafter, he is chief in my stead.'

"Turning to the young man, he took in his hands a fine war bonnet with two [554] rows of feathers as a special honor. Putting the bonnet on the boy's head, he said to him, 'This is nothing but a bunch of feathers given by your friends.'

"The boy was now a war chief. Because the leader had made him chief in his stead, the young warrior walked right to the place to the north of the door and took his seat. The newest member usually had to sit at the end of the line to the south of the door, but he was the greatest fighter they had ever had.

"Then it was over. The young war leader rolled up his blanket and walked out; the others followed him."[9]

[9] One has more than a sneaking suspicion that this story has been embellished with its portion of heroic ornament. But it was told to illustrate how a war bonnet was obtained, and that it does very well.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

shoot an arrow into anybody's pot of meat, taking whatever piece stuck to the shaft.

Parents warned boys who were constantly recalcitrant that they would become such. Most Crazy Dogs started out as wayward youths.

Such men carried on as Dogs until after the performance of some conspicuous act of bravery. After many years of Crazy Dog activity, their rattles were taken from them by a respectable middle-aged man (ţénapa). "They had attained prestige and could leave off their antics." By their war records ex-Crazy Dogs were always men of importance in the tribe.

It is clear from these facts that the war bonnet and other special insignia served a definite social function in Comanche society; they marked the status of the war chief as distinct from that of the lesser war leader, and the special devotees of the war cult from the common warrior.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE WAR BONNET WEARER

The Comanche owner of a war bonnet was under obligation never to retreat. This was the primary duty assumed with the status. The bonnet was a symbol of tribal integrity and honor to the Comanche, to be protected at all costs. The mere fact that the wearer could not retreat made him a rallying point for all other fighters when he was hard-pressed, for it was equally disgraceful for the bonnet to fall into the hands of the enemy should the wearer be wounded or killed. The war bonnet wearer, dismounted and hard-pressed, could indeed be rescued by a fellow tribesman who dared to risk dashing in to carry the brave off on his horse. This was the sole escape with honor. In one fierce three-day battle with the Utes, a Comanche war chief was so wounded in the leg that he was having difficulty. Another ţékniwap mounted behind him and held him in his place on the horse while he fought off the enemy. The Utes forced the Comanches back and ever back over a battle-field sixty-five miles long. When, during the action, the wounded war chief died, he was tied to the saddle by his protector to avoid his being captured with his bonnet. During the entire fight his body and its protector were screened by a group of fighting braves.

On the other hand, it was the absolute duty of a ţékniwap to help a dismounted comrade. Should he fail to do so, any other war chief who observed his disloyalty could publicly upbraid him with the act and take the war bonnet from him in punishment. The accuser was then free to offer it to some other warrior whom he thought deserved it.[14] But this man was also free to refuse if he feared the obligations attached to it. This was said

[14] Compare also the case cited on page 55, where a claimant to a piece of land (on the reservation) had the judgment go against him because he had one time failed to rescue a comrade.

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to be the way it was done, though no case describing such a situation was collected. 558

A war chief whose nerve failed him in a dangerous position *could* retreat—by giving up his right to wear the bonnet. He could cast it off and flee for his life. But he was a man without status thenceforth, for he could never again regain the bonnet and its rank. Life certainly would have been miserable from that point onward. Men hailed him as "elder sister."[15]

But what a chance this disaster opened for an ambitious brave to gain the war leader's status in one stride! He could dash into the danger spot to pick up the abandoned hat with his spear or bow. Turning his horse, he would bring it back and put it on a pole behind his lines. If the fight still continued when the sun was about to set, he then went to the pole and put on the hat. Thus arrayed he charged the enemy four times and struck an adversary on each foray. If he was successful in this and came through alive, the hat was his with all the privileges, honors, obligations and dangerous duties which went with it. This was the practice in the Those Who Move Often and Antelope bands. The lower rank war bonnet could be picked up by any one who saw it and was willing to assume the obligations adhering thereto. For it, the use of the bow or spear was not necessary, according to Becomes A Middle-Aged Man.[16] 555 726

PEACEMAKING

The waging of war was a matter of individual initiative, but the making of peace was a prerogative only in the hands of the war chiefs. A war leader on a raid could make peace in behalf of his own raiding party on his own authority. Such a peace, however, had no binding effect upon other members of the band and not at all upon the tribe. Band peace was made only upon unanimous consent of the warrior class, i.e., the meeting of the ʇɛ́kniwapnɔ. The historical making of peace with the Kiowas has been noted on page 12. All Comanche bands agreed to this with the result that it has remained unbroken since 1790. A permanent peace with the Cheyenne was effected in 1840.[17] 728 624

Relations with other tribes were more in the nature of truces than peace,

[15] According to a generalized observation by Neighbors (*The Comanches*, p. 130): "He is deprived of his office by any misfortune, such as loss of many men in battle, or even a single defeat, or being taken prisoner, but never for any private act unconnected with the welfare of the whole tribe." It is not so much that he was deprived of his office, as that he no longer could gain a following.

[16] The above rules are formulated principles for which no histories in action were obtainable.

[17] The Comanche version of the details of this occasion is lost. Its setting in the Cheyenne picture will be included in the author's forthcoming study of Cheyenne Law-ways.

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×627 684 tongues were collected and roasted by the women. When they were cooked and taken from the fire to be cleaned, men and women lined up and started dancing. When they stopped, all was ready. Then a war leader called for a virtuous woman to come forth to cut the tongue—not a virgin, but a wife who had never betrayed her husband. The leader warned the husbands that if their wives stepped forward and were disqualified they must not get angry or punish them.

The men were in one group; the women in another. There was silence and embarrassment when the call to come forward was given. At last one bolder than the rest stepped out. From the group of men could come an anonymous voice. "Go back!" It would be the command of a secret lover. The woman obeyed, for the leader had announced that if any unfaithful wife was permitted to cut the tongue, she would die. One woman after another would make the try and be sent back by her lovers, until finally one came forth who stood the test. To her the knife was given; she cut the tongue amidst the *"li-li-li-li"* (cry of applause) of the other women. One informant said that this ceremony was used to bring success to a large war party before it set out. If a virtuous woman did the cutting, success was theirs. If an unfaithful wife were to do it, they would meet disaster. As she interpreted it, lovers revealed their secrets because it was their duty to safeguard their fellow-warriors' lives. Because it was a religious ceremony under the patronage of the supernatural, women were safe from their husbands when their lovers told on them. No one ever heard of a husband molesting his wife for being found out in this test.

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×627 To complete the record of the supernatural relations to evidence and law an account of oaths as used by the Comanches in certain non-litigational situations is needed.

Among the Comanches unwitnessed deeds had to be verified by a simple ritual *ex parte* statement (akin to affidavit) before they were first recounted publicly. When a lone scout returned from his reconnaissance, he rode into the camp and scattered a pile of buffalo chips which the waiting warriors had placed before them. This guaranteed the truth of his statements. If the scout had killed a man, he rode directly to the pile and ran his spear through a chip for each man killed. With each chip speared, he cried, *"ahé"* ("I have claimed it.")

A Comanche adventure with the Utes shows the efficacy of the buffalo chip ritual (accompanied, here too, by tangible evidence), for even in the face of some skepticism, the story had to be accepted on the basis of the manure test (and the horse and woman taken). The Victory Dance was even given to celebrate the feat.

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Case 32. Coup Substantiated by Oath
Informant: That's It

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"A Comanche band out looking for trouble were closing in on their objective. They had a scout out in front. He climbed a hill and looked about, but didn't see anything. Pretty soon he got sleepy and dismounted. He left his arms on his horse and dozed off.

"Some Utes came along then and made camp just below him. Some of the men came up the hill and saw him there, but they thought he was a Ute. He had some kind of a blanket over his hand, so they couldn't see him. They took their places near him and sat down to smoke.

"Finally the scout woke up and heard some talking. He peeked out and saw they were Utes. Then he tried to figure out what to do. Just then the young people down below started a deer. The braves on the hill got to their horses and rode after, leaving only some old men behind. Then the Comanche saw what to do. He got up and limped toward the Ute camp. The old men saw him and laughed. Near the camp the scout saw a horse with a deer hoof necklace. He got on and followed the people who were chasing the deer the way he wanted to go. Cutting across, as though to head the deer off, he caught up to a woman who was ahead of the others and nearest the deer. Seizing her bridle-vein, he led her off and took her back to the Comanche camp.

"When a man has such luck they have a special ceremony. The people stand in a circle with a pile of buffalo chips in the middle. The man rides across it and scatters the pile. Then he must tell all from the beginning. The leader of the raid said he was satisfied. They had a captive with no losses, so would turn back. When they got back to the main camp, some of the warriors didn't believe it. But they didn't have any other test. The people gave the Victory Dance."

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The Comanches do not seem to have had any oath ritual for settling disputed coup claims as did the Cheyenne and other Plains Indians, even though the Comanche conditional curse resembled the Crow oath in form. No instances of such disputes could be remembered.

Before summary, it may be recalled that the separatism of Comanche law results, as has been pointed out, in several divergent lines of action according to the nature of the offense. In the bargaining procedure there is neither ritual nor any other appeal to supra-social forces. The procedure was a purely legal action of negotiation and settlement.

In summary, ritualistic procedure was used in the procuring of evidence in adultery and sorcery. Procedure based on ritual was of three kinds: (a) conditional curse, (b) divination, (c) oath. Ordeal did not lead to legal procedure. Sunkilling was used to detect and punish adultery, the detection showing in the punishment. In adultery disputes it could be used only on a woman, but has been lately turned back on men who have evoked the sunkilling. The joking ordeal also was used to detect adultery, or any sex inter-

2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
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solved to make their disgusting horseflesh serve the double purpose of supplying us food for the body, and themselves food for mirth. In our Indian dresses, which consisted of leggins rising only to the knee, and a short hunting coat, the upper portion of the leg, that is, above the leggin, was necessarily bare. As we sat upon the ground together, our feet tied, it was likewise necessarily exposed. When the meat designed for us had boiled until the fat began to fry and sputter, they would throw it with such marvelous dexterity from the end of their roasting sticks, that it would fall on our naked limbs hissing hot. If the laziest reader of this book will try a similar experiment on himself, he will find it admirably calculated to arouse his activity. I venture to affirm he will squirm more energetically, turn over quicker, and throw a greater amount of exercise into a given period than he ever did before in his life. It had the same effect on us, and the muscular demonstrations we made during the exhibition "brought down the house" far more uproariously than any of our previous performances during the day. It resulted in my declining supper altogether, having a prejudice against the waiters in attendance, and of raising broad blisters on my persŏn, the scars of which I will carry with me to the grave.

At the conclusion of these exercises, so refreshing on one side and so painful on the other, the warriors threw themselves on the ground to sleep. They lay near each other, forming a large circle, leaving a space in the center some fifty feet in diameter. Our sleeping apartment was in this space, and we were "put to bed and tucked up" in the following original fashion: First, we were made to lie down upon our backs, with our arms and feet extended. Four stakes were then driven firmly through the sward, to which our hands and feet were fastened, holding us in such a

2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

thrown over a pole resting on crossed stakes—but also bring back the hides they may succeed in taking. 224 492

On the occasion I now refer to, the party moved west, 224 threading their winding way over the mountains, and across numerous streams and valleys of greater or less width and extent. In the afternoon of the third day we struck a wide, rolling prairie. Dividing it nearly in the center was a high, smooth ridge—its summit reached from both sides by an easy, gradual ascent. As we crossed the prairie and approached this ridge, our scattered cavalcade extended, perhaps, a quarter of a mile, moving forward carelessly, and in no order whatever. I was at the extreme rear, by the side of the Spotted Leopard, and surrounded by the pack mules. As the foremost horsemen reached the height, they 726 ● halted suddenly, making hurried signs, while two or three of the braves galloped back down the slope, riding eagerly to and fro among their brethren, as if urging them to push forward without delay. The whole band, thereupon, dashed up the hill, except the Spotted Leopard and myself, who remained with the mules in the rear, and on reaching the summit deployed into line. By this time I had heard the cry of "the Apaches, the Apaches," and knew at once there was hot work at hand.

As yet, however, I had seen nothing of an enemy, and only drew the inference there was one present from the cries I had heard, and the general commotion that prevailed. In the course of two or three minutes after our line formed on the ridge, the air was rent with the noise of the war whoop, and up the opposite ascent, at full speed, came the Apaches in solid body, like a black cloud. As they approached, a shower of arrows were discharged from both lines, when they rushed upon each other in a hand-to-hand encounter.

2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

726 From the position I occupied I had a fair, unobstructed view of the battle. It was fierce and terrible. The horses reared, and plunged, and fell upon each other, their riders dealing blow for blow, and thrust for thrust, some falling from their saddles to the ground, and others trampling madly over them.

The Comanches outnumbered the enemy; nevertheless, they were forced to retreat, falling back down the hill almost to my position; but still they were not pursued, the Apaches appearing to be content to hold possession of the ground. Soon, the tribe of the Spotted Leopard again rallied and dashed once more to the attack. If possible, this contest was severer, as it was longer than the first. Again the fierce blow was given and returned; again horses and men intermingled in the melee—stumbled, fell, and rolled upon the ground, while the wide heavens resounded with their hideous shrieks and cries.

My blood thrilled through my veins as I looked upon the scene. I had mingled in encounters fierce even as that, but never before in the midst of the hottest fight was I overcome with such a sense of terror. To be an inactive spectator of a battle is far more painful than to be a participator in it.

I hoped devoutly during the engagement that the Comanches would be beaten, being impressed with the belief that if I should fall into the enemies' hands, my chances of escape would be increased, for I had often heard that the Apaches, though a most warlike nation, were more merciful to prisoners than others of their race. But in this
727 I was disappointed. The Apaches at length gave way, disappearing beyond the ridge. Instead of pursuing their advantage, however, the Comanches hastily gathered up their dead and retreated towards the mountains we had crossed.

2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

ing they would be of service on the way, packed their house-000
hold goods, furnished themselves with provisions, and started through the Indian country toward the distant city of the Great Salt Lake.

They struck the Río Grande at Eagle Pass, pushed onward beyond the futhermost settlements, and for a month were slowly winding among the mountains, when many of their teams began to fail. A party of forty were thus compelled to fall in the rear, and finally became separated from their companions. With this party was the Haskins family.

They now began to be annoyed by the Indians. For sev-726 ●
eral days they had been seen scouring the prairies in different directions, ascertaining, perhaps, the strength and quality of the train. They constantly grew bolder and bolder, in the daytime dashing up within a short distance, and at night driving off more and more of their cattle, until, at length, they were destitute of sufficient force to proceed. In this helpless state, they were surrounded by a cloud of savages, and taken prisoners.

In this party of forty were fourteen women and several 727
young infants. The men, among whom, of course, the husband and father, were massacred without exception, the women less fortunate, and the infants were carried away. I turn with disgust from the contemplation of the cruelty to which these captive women were subjected by the lustful hellhounds as they bore them off in triumph to their camps. Some idea of their barbarous nature may be conceived from the fact that while on the way, when an infant cried, it would be snatched from its mother's breast, a hole cut under its chin, then hung on the point of a broken limb, and there left to linger through its little painful life. In this manner, I was assured by Mrs. Haskins and her duaghters, every child unable to comprehend the danger of crying was disposed of.

3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945)1952
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492 manche was mounted that he exhibited himself to best advantage. "Here he is at home and his skill . . . is truly astonishing."[29]

492 726 868 One of the first things a Comanche child learned was to ride. He started riding in a pack on his mother's back long before he could walk. Next he was strapped to her saddle on a gentle mare. By the time he was four or five he was off on a pony of his own. Both boys and girls were taught to ride with or without a saddle. Girls were taught to ride astride and became almost as much at home on horseback as boys. But it was not enough for the Comanche boy merely to learn to ride. He had to be a trick rider. Day after day, month after month, he practiced in drill. He learned to pick up objects from the ground while his mount was traveling at full speed. At first, small and light objects were selected, but as the boy grew older and more proficient, heavier and more bulky objects were exchanged for the lighter ones, until at last, unassisted and at full speed, he might be able to pick up from the ground and swing across his horse the body of the heaviest man. To rescue a fallen comrade was the highest obligation of any Comanche warrior. To leave a comrade on the field to be stripped, mutilated, and scalped by desecrating enemies was a disgrace to The People. Every man was expected to be able to meet the challenge when the need arose—and he had to be able to do it alone. Generally, however, rescues were made by two men working togther. Rushing neck by neck on either side of the prostrate person, both riders stooped at the same instant and swung the body in front of one of the riders. This stunt was practiced over and over on all kinds of ground until riders and ponies could do it without a hitch.

492 726 In attack, the Comanche, like other horse Indians, made his mount a mobile shield between himself and his enemy. How many a trooper or pioneer within his defensive corral of wagons has cursed at the scudding Indian whirling about him, loosing arrows from beneath his horse's neck, with nothing showing but a leg hooked over the horse's backbone! The key to this fancy trick was a loop of rope attached to the cantle or, if the rider was bareback, plaited into his steed's mane. With the loop slipped over his head and under his outside arm, a trained rider (and what Comanche was not?) clung to

[29] R. B. Marcy, *Exploration of the Red River of Louisiana in the Year 1852*, 32 Cong., 2 sess., *Sen. Exec. Doc. 54*, 103.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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the side of his horse with both hands free for shooting or picking up heavy objects while riding hell bent for leather.[30]

Thus it was that Homer Thrall imaginatively saw the Comanche as "the Arab of the Prairie—the model of the fabled Thessalian 'Centaur,' half horse, half man, so closely joined and so dexterously managed that it appears but one animal, fleet and furious."[31]

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Long before they got horses, the Comanches, like their Shoshone cousins, liked to put a good bet on a stick game or an arrow-throwing contest. Small wonder that in later years they took to horse racing with gusto and mighty bets.

In one popular race the contestants started from a line and rushed full speed toward a tree, the one touching it first being the winner. In another they rushed at a pole resting horizontally about six feet from the ground. If a rider stopped his horse a moment too soon, he failed to touch the pole; if a moment too late, the horse passed under the pole, possibly leaving the rider dangling to the pole or thrown to the ground. In still another contest, two strips of buffalo hide were stretched across the track about six to ten feet apart. The starting point was about two hundred yards from the strips. The contestants jumped their mounts over the first strip, reversed their direction, and raced back to the starting point. The horse which failed to get beyond the first strip with all four feet or which went beyond the second lost the race regardless.

Most Comanche racers were "doctored" for a race. An owner had a medicine man chew up some unidentified medicine which he spit in the horse's mouth or ear. Whatever its specific effect, it was power in the Comanche view. No woman could come near a racer when it had had medicine made for it, and after racing, both horse and rider went into a creek to wash off the effects of the medicine.

In many instances horse racing proved to be really profitable business for the Comanches—who were not the least loath to fleece a sucker. Colonel Dodge has left a story of a race which the officers at Fort Chadburne, Texas, to their regret arranged with some Comanches. After the first bets had been laid, the Comanches innocently

[30] R. I. Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West*, 331; Marcy, *Exploration of the Red River of Louisiana in the Year 1852*, 103.

[31] H. S. Thrall, *A Pictorial History of Texas*, 445.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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So they sent down for the old man to come up. He did not want to go, but one of his wives urged him into it—he now had four wives. 701

The young chief dictated the whole thing. When the old man came into the tipi he told him to sit between his brother and his wife. The old man hesitated. He was afraid. 539

"It is all right," he was assured by the elder brother.

When he was seated, he hugged the children and was very pleased.

"We are going to give you back your wife," the chief told him, "Tomorrow when you come back, we shall have a feast here. Bring one of your wives. Then when we have eaten, you can take this woman and her children to your lodges."

The old man and the woman were not as one once again until they were on their horses and ready to go the next day.

Thereafter the old man told the two brothers to pitch their tipis back of his. "We are brothers now. My wives are yours any time you want. Just for the asking." » » »

On the raid or warpath the leader of a war party was in supreme control of all the activities of his followers as long as they remained in his party. With so loose and voluntary a collection of personnel, disobedience might be expected, but a warrior seldom refused to obey his leader. It was said that a brave leader never asked of his men what he himself would not readily do. Each knew this. Each knew, too, that disobedience might bring disaster to the party. The leader did not use force or punishment. If a man did not trust the ability and wisdom of the war leader, either he did not join or he separated himself from the party. A warrior followed only the leader in whom he had confidence; when he lost confidence, he withdrew from that leader's sphere. This, be it noted, was also the procedure when a man and his friends did not like the way in which things were being run in the band in times of peace. 726●

The powers of the war chief included determining the objectives of the raid, designating the scouts, deciding upon the camping places and periods of rest, appointing the cook and water carriers, formulating the general tactics of attack, ordering the expedition to turn back, making a truce with the enemy, and dividing the booty.[9] 726 624

[9] Informant: Yellowfish; see also Hoebel, *The Political Organization and Law-Ways of the Comanche Indians*, 25.

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Warfare

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Ordinarily, a man contemplating leading out a war or raiding party made medicine to determine when and where the raid should take place. Then he called his friends and some older men into his lodge to discuss the matter. After they had eaten, a pipe was filled and the host made known his plans. Those who did not care to join the enterprise let the pipe pass without smoking.

If the leader had received sufficient encouragement from his guardian spirit and his comrades, he put on his war paint and all his war paraphernalia. During the afternoon he began to drum and to sing war songs in his tipi. Some of the men going with him were already prepared, and it was only necessary for them to go over and join the leader in the drumming and singing. About sundown the party mounted their horses and paraded through the village to enlist other volunteers. The parade signified that the party was leaving that night. The warriors paraded the village four times in single file, singing war songs. There were as many parades as there were leaders planning to take out a party. Men who had performed the honorable act of carrying a dismounted or wounded comrade out of battle danger rode double. This was a method of giving public recognition for meritorious service. No onlooker could forget this ever present obligation or the public recognition to a man who had fulfilled it.

When the party was a popular one, men, women, and children turned out to join in the singing and to encourage the warriors. Young maidens sometimes serenaded the lodges of popular warriors whom they wanted to join the party, chanting the victories of ancestors and the valor of contemporaries and imploring or goading them to join.

Both maidens and old women who promoted a successful raiding party expected a horse or other plunder for their efforts. During the period of preparation, shields belonging to volunteers hung by day on racks before the warrior's doorway to absorb the all-powerful medicine of the sun. Each rack was either a lance or a tripod of three lances.[6]

The night before departure, the War Dance was held. If the leader was going forth to avenge the death of a friend, it was also

[5] Informant: That's It.

[6] Informants: Yellowfish, See How Deep the Water Is, Kills Something, and Face Wrinkling Like Getting Old; see also Gregg, *op. cit.*, 436; Babb, *op. cit.*, 107–108; Hoebel, *The Political Organization and Law-Ways of the Comanche Indians*, 24; Burnet, "American Aborigines, Indians of Texas," *loc. cit.*, I (June 5, 1824), 177.

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726 called a Vengeance Dance. The dance did not begin until dark, and it ended in time for the party to take its departure before day, although the Comanches did not rely on dancing to arouse the war spirit of the group as much as some of the other Plains Indians. The tendency of the Comanches to make a decision quickly and to leave the same night as the dance were additional factors tending to eliminate unnecessary details. As darkness settled over the village, the people gathered around a fire, leaving an opening in the circle toward the proposed objective of the party. The volunteers were attired in all their war dress and paint. Only braves leaving on the raid could dance, but each was aided by a woman partner. A dancer might carry a rattle, but it was not essential. The warriors danced when they felt the urge, unless ordered to dance by a whip wielder. Sometimes there was little actual dancing. The spectators formed a circle outside the dancers, and joined in the singing.

The War Dance in some respects compares to the modern college pep rally preceding a football game. Some songs were merely musical [533] and without words. The songs with words were known by most people. Popular love songs, of which there were many, were sung. It is very difficult to render the songs into English without sacrificing the rhythm, but a sample verse of a popular song goes as follows:

Going away tonight;
Be gone a long time.
While I'm gone,
I'll be thinking of you.[7]

The dance would be interrupted at intervals by an old warrior, who approached the drummer and announced that he wanted to tell a story while the dancers rested. Having received recognition, he would recite the details of a coup which he had gained and take an oath that what he told was true. "Sun, Father, you saw me do it. Earth, Mother, you saw me do it. Do not permit me to live until another season, if I speak falsely." When the speaker finished, he was given an enthusiastic ovation: a mingling of war whoops, drum beating, gourd rattling, stamping of feet, and clapping of hands. Be-

[7] Informant: See How Deep the Water Is.

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fore the noise subsided, the drummers would strike up the next war song and the dancing would be resumed, shortly to be interrupted again. Dancing warriors might occasionally interrupt the dance to narrate exploits of their own. Finally, the leader spoke of the necessity of the war party and its aim, and ended by appealing to his followers to display their accustomed courage while on the raid, that their people might be proud of them and not consider them cowards.

Shortly afterwards, the leader silently and without ceremony left the dance. The dance continued for a time, but occasionally a warrior and a maiden quietly slipped away into the dark for a few minutes together before parting, for the Comanches enjoined no continence, although they must not be seen leaving together. There might be several parties going out under as many leaders. In such a case, instead of having so many War Dances going at once, each party might end its dance in a short time and make way for another leader and his party. The leader had previously designated a rendezvous outside the village, and after the dance, the warriors returned to their lodges to get their horses and equipment; then silently they stole off to the gathering place. The raid was under way.

Under no circumstances could the War Dance or departure occur in daytime. That was bad medicine. On one occasion a group of warriors held their dance and left during the day. Not a single member of the party returned. The case was never forgotten nor repeated.[8]

Each man who gathered at the rendezvous had provided himself with arms, lasso, food, clothing, a robe if the weather was disagreeable, and horses. The food consisted of dried meat, in sheets or pounded fine, and mesquite meal. Both were very strengthening, packed well, and were convenient to carry. This food was taken only as emergency rations, for they were expected to subsist on the flesh of animals killed along the route.

When the raiders planned a quick thrust at the enemy and a hurried get-away, they left their women, children, and lodges at the main camp and traveled as unencumbered as possible. The leader and men with sacred shields might each take along a woman to help with their equipment, but they seldom exercised the privilege. It was not uncommon, however, for some women to accompany them for the

[8] Informant: Yellowfish.

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726 fun of a little fighting; they could snipe with bows and arrows from the fringe of the fray, although Rhoda Greyfoot says they never went on the "hardest" raids. For a married woman to join up with some man who was going on the warpath was, as has already been shown, the commonest manner of absconding.

When the entire band intended a series of onslaughts upon a distant enemy (three to four hundred miles from headquarters was a commonplace distance for a raid), they not infrequently took women along. The women carried small lodges and a few supplies to set up a temporary camp, the preferred location being one which provided a convenient place from which to strike at the enemy and was at the same time far enough removed to be safe from pursuit. Although the Apaches took their best medicine men along and the Kiowas included in the party a buffalo doctor who had power to heal wounds and an owl doctor with power to tell what was going to happen, the Comanches encouraged their medicine men with the greatest healing power to remain in camp and care for the wounded as they were brought in.[9]

723 487 A war party carefully studied and mapped any unfamiliar country that it expected to traverse. All those needing information about the route and the terrain were assembled and instructed by the well-informed elders. After they were seated in a circle, a map was plotted on the ground showing rivers, hills, valleys, water holes, and any other identifying or unusual features. Then a line was drawn to represent the route planned for the first day. From a bundle of sticks, marked consecutively beginning with "one," a stick with a single notch was stuck at the point where the party was to camp at the end of the first day's journey. When the novices had committed this much to memory, the second day's journey was illustrated in the same manner. Instruction continued in similar fashion until it was felt that each man could follow the route satisfactorily. Thus a group could usually traverse without difficulty a region entirely new to members of the party. It is reported that one such instructed party, none of whom were over nineteen and none of whom had ever been in Mexico, were able to travel from their main camp on Brady's creek, Texas, and raid as far as the city of Monterrey without mishap and

[9] Lehman, *op. cit.*, 38, 148; Alice Marriott, *The Ten Grandmothers*, 35.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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with no other guidance than the instructions furnished before starting out.[10]

The leader of an organized war party was absolute dictator of all the activities of his followers as long as they remained with the party. The legal governmental powers of the leader have been considered elsewhere, but for the sake of clarity some repetition here is essential. The men obeyed their leader implicitly and willingly. Each knew that a brave leader never asked of his men what he himself would not readily do. Each knew, too, that to disobey might bring disaster on the party. If, on the other hand, disaffection did set in, the disgruntled warrior and those who sided with him merely withdrew to go their own way.

It was the duty of the leader to determine the objective of the raid, to plan the routes, to determine the camping places and the periods of rest, to designate the scouts, to appoint the cook and water carrier, to plan the general strategy of the attack, to divide the booty, and to order a retreat or make a truce with the enemy.

One or two scouts were kept from a one-half to a day's march ahead. A war party rarely traveled at night by choice, and the men rode without much talking, steady and quiet, all intent on where they were going. About midday they stopped to rest and water the horses. At night they camped, preferably in a grove near fresh water. If they were in enemy territory and a hill was available, the war party circled gradually up and around the hill until it reached a camping spot halfway up the hill on the side opposite the direction from which it had approached. The leader sent two sentries to the top of the hill, and the rest of the party slept soundly through the night. An enemy following their trail was exposed on the side of the hill under the view of the sentries in plenty of time to warn the sleeping encampment.

The leader carried a sacred pipe. When the evening meal was over, the pipe was formally filled, lighted and, after the usual offerings to the spiritual powers, passed to each warrior in turn. Then the leader talked to his men, telling them of the country, the best routes, and the safest places of retreat, giving them advice and telling them how

[10] R. I. Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West*, 414, from an account by Pedro Espinosa, a Mexican-Comanche warrior.

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726 they should act. Sometimes they sang. Perhaps before going to sleep the leader sang a spiritual song—a prayer to the guardian spirits for help and wisdom. Occasionally the leader might carry the pipe and have the men dance at night along the route. Ishatai carried the pipe around and had each society dance every night while on the way to Adobe Walls in 1874.[11]

War parties are difficult to distinguish from raiding parties, for the Comanches conducted both in much the same manner. The distinction rested for the most part in the stated objective of the undertaking, although a raiding party, if confronted with enemies, would fight; and a war party was not likely to pass by a chance to make off with horses or booty.

721 Only the vengeance party moved with a singleness of purpose. The Comanche parent who had lost a son to the enemy "never rested in his mind until he had an enemy scalp to make things even." If he was still of a fighting age, he could seek a scalp or organize his own vengeance raid. But if this was beyond his abilities or if the aggrieved person was a widow who had lost a son or a husband, he or she would take a pipe to a war leader and offer smoke. If he accepted, the war leader bound himself to organize a vengeance expedition. He had a camp crier announce the project to all the camp. "The young people don't care if they get killed on this raid," he cried for all to hear. "They want revenge."

With the taking of a single scalp, the revenge raid accomplished its mission and was inevitably turned back by its leader, even if bigger prospects were near at hand. One scalp was all that was necessary for the Scalp Dance, and this was what they were after.

726 In their most destructive raids, the Comanche war party proceeded to some convenient point within striking distance of the settlements to be raided and established a temporary camp in which they left most of their supplies, horses, guards, and women. The leader sent out scouts to gather information. If their report was favorable, he informed the warriors of the plan of attack. The party often broke into a number of small bands, and the destructive work was begun. The preferred time was the period following the full of the moon. They

[11] Informant: Yellowfish. Yellowfish's father went to Adobe Walls with Ishatai, and afterwards told him the details of the raid many times.

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never by choice made an offensive attack in the dark; they never raided when the moon was a crescent with the horns pointing upward, for the moon was then "full and running over" and there was the likelihood of rain, after which their trails could be easily traced on the moist earth.[12] They struck swiftly on moonlight nights or surprised undefended, isolated settlers by day when circumstances were favorable, killing or capturing their victims and driving their stolen animals back to their rendezvous, where they were attended until such time as they could return to the main camp. When approaching the camp or settlement, the warriors separated and entered it by pairs or small groups. If an enemy dog barked, the raiders tossed it a piece of meat to quiet it. The older, experienced men cut loose the more valuable horses and led them out, while the younger men gathered up the loose animals. At times it was understood that the horses taken by each man were to be his own; at other times, they were common property to be divided by the leader of the expedition. By means of signals, the raiders kept in touch with one another and would reunite when they had completed their foray or when considerations of safety demanded.

Frequently, of course, the Comanches engaged an enemy prepared to offer resistance. One simple strategy was to send forward a small party on swift horses to lead the enemy into an ambuscade. Sometimes this plan was successful, but often those hidden in ambush were unable to restrain their eagerness and rushed out too soon, causing the stratagem to fail. Although the leader planned the attack, when the battle began each man was free to fight according to the dictates of his own medicine and his personal inclinations.

As a rule the Comanches relied upon surprise, upon the effect of a sudden and furious dash, accompanied by an unearthly, blood-curdling war whoop. They avoided a pitched battle when they were matched by an equal or greater number. They preferred to surprise a much smaller party. If the enemy was not surprised or put to flight at once but stood his ground, the wedge-shaped mass of Comanches quickly assumed battle formation. The wedge turned into the shape of a huge ring or wheel without hub or spokes, whose rim consisted

[12] Julia Estill, "Indian Pictographs near Lange's Mill, Gillespie County, Texas," Texas Folklore Society *Publications*, IV, 105.

off the horses, if possible unnoticed by the enemy, whose attention was distracted at the time. While the riders continued to draw the attention of the enemy, the dismounted warriors slipped silently to a position from which they could strike a mortal blow.[14] Another plan of strategy was to take up a position in a creek valley where there was a thicket of bushes and stunted trees and where the low, steep banks of a meandering stream afforded a measure of protection. In such a place their concealment was so complete that it would have been difficult to believe any Indians were there had it not been for the twang of a bowstring or the swish of an arrow. In such a position they were known to have fought without giving or asking quarter until there was not one left to bend a bow.

When a comrade was killed or wounded, the Comanches endeavored to retrieve his body or carry him to safety if he were still living. Two Indians riding abreast, one on each side of the prostrate warrior, would reach down and take hold of the warrior as they passed, either dragging him to safety or swinging him up beside one of them. If he could not be removed by mounted comrades, he was sometimes lassoed and dragged to a spot where he could be recovered.

To the white man the Comanche appeared to be a cruel, savage warrior. But in all fairness it must be remembered that he knew nothing of the white man's code of war and his so-called humanity. He could not take many prisoners for the simple reason that he had no prison to hold them and perhaps no food to sustain them. He killed the men, took the women when he could, and adopted into the tribe children who were too young to run away. His courage was superb. Since he gave no quarter, he asked none in return. Sometimes, when the fight became desperate, a warrior dismounted and took off his moccasins in token of his resolve never to retreat.[15] Even when surrounded, with no hope of escape, he always refused to surrender and fought as long as any strength remained in his body.

Although it was not their custom to torture unfortunate enemies, at times when the Comanches became unusually angered, they resorted to extreme forms of barbarism in seeking revenge. For the most part, the treatment an individual captive received depended on

[14] R. I. Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West*, 380, 381.
[15] Informant: Face Wrinkling Like Getting Old.

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The Comanches

727 Captive white children were generally initiated into the tribe by a series of terrifying experiences in which the Indians tried their courage by brutal treatment and threats of destruction. They would sometimes be tied to a stake while their captors, with slashes and menacing gestures, punctuated by hideous yells, threatened to cut them to pieces, shoot them, or even burn them at the stake. Some of these unfortunate children never lived to recount their experiences. If the victim survived the initiation to the satisfaction of his captors, he became a slave and was compelled to do menial tasks, like Carrying Her Sunshade. If he proved his mettle according to Comanche standards, better days awaited him. He would likely be adopted as a member of a chief's or warrior's family. Later he was permitted to take part in raids and battles. If he proved a brave fighter, he might become an honored and respected warrior and rise to any position open to a natural-born Comanche. The captives, mostly Mexicans, who did not become warriors tended the horse herds and practiced such specialized industries as gun repairing and saddle-making. The captive woman who made a dutiful and faithful wife and the captive man who had won war honors were sometimes publicly honored.[17] Ordinarily the Comanches refused to surrender a captive without the payment of a reward. Some of the more responsible chiefs tried to stop the taking of white women and children as captives, and some went so far as to buy captives from other Comanches and liberate them. Some of the most hardened warriors are known to have wept because a captive of whom they had become fond returned to his own people.

574 All the accounts agree that a Comanche felt obligated to lodge, entertain, protect, and feed, even to his last morsel, any person, regardless of nationality, even though it might be his bitterest enemy, who happened to ask for lodging.

●726 When a Comanche raiding or war party found itself hard pressed
202 by an enemy force too large to resist, or if it feared pursuit, it divided and subdivided its forces until each fleeing warrior left a separate trace and pursuers found it impossible to follow the trail. Scattered Comanches were adept in communicating with one another through means of signals. After a night raid when the warriors knew them-

[17] Linton, "The Comanche Sun Dance," *loc. cit.*, 421; Burnet, "American Aborigines, Indians of Texas," *loc. cit.*, Vol. I (May 22, 1824), 163.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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selves to be in close proximity, they communicated by imitating an owl or a coyote. Writing of one occasion when the members of a party had become separated during a night raid on the settlements, one of the raiders said, "When all was quiet we hooted like an owl for our missing companion; when he failed to answer, we knew he was dead."[18] They would build fires and surround them with blankets, forcing columns of smoke to ascend as signals. Different numbers of columns had various meanings. Mounds of stones were arranged to indicate routes followed and the time of the moon when they were arranged. When buffalo bones were available, they were certain to be used to convey messages to comrades. Herman Lehmann has left an interesting paragraph on signaling.

> We found buffalo bones and on them pictures representing a fight with the white people. On some bones properly arranged were the pictures of seven men pierced with arrows, also a wagon burning up; the bones pointed upward. Twelve bones peculiarly arranged represented twelve days journey. We traveled twelve days and saw smokes a long way apart in a row pointing westward which indicated that the Rangers had made it too hot for them and they had gone on west.[19]

The scattered warriors would seek some point where the chances were good that their trail would be discovered. Providing themselves with a thin piece of birch bark, which can be folded without breaking, they placed upon it the information which they wished their comrades to have, then striking a hatchet deep into the trunk of a tree and withdrawing it, they placed the bark in the incision, the outer part pointing in the direction they had taken.

After an expedition the Comanches normally had plenty of mounts, and they kept going night and day at a high rate of speed until they believed themselves out of danger of pursuers. On one occasion they kept going so long that one captive "began to think they had quit eating."[20] During a fast retreat, old, slow, and weak

[18] C. and J. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, 64.
[19] Lehmann, *op. cit.*, 119.
[20] C. and J. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, 35.

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horses that fell behind were abandoned. No time was lost hunting for food. If necessary, old horses were killed and consumed. Captives who retarded the speed of the retreat might be abandoned or killed. To avoid surprise, they stopped to rest for only an hour or two and then moved on again, making three or four such stops within a day. To discourage pursuit, they would take a route on which they knew there was no water. When they became very thirsty, they killed horses and drank the blood. The meager supply of water carried in buffalo paunches was rationed, well guarded, and conserved for the children and women when they were along, or for wounded warriors. Clinton Smith declares that on one occasion the warriors did without water until their throats became too swollen for them to swallow readily.[21]

After an engagement or a stealthy garnering of horses, the leader and war-bonnet wearers covered the escape with rear-guard actions. The leader designated two men to remain on fast horses some distance behind, yet close enough to signal, in order to watch the back trail. They sometimes set fire to the grass to blot out their trail against both men and dogs, or they emptied pouches of skunk musk on the trail to prevent dogs from following in pursuit. After the advent of the white trader, the rear-guard scouts carried field glasses.[22]

When raiders had put two or three days of safety between themselves and possible pursuers, they halted. They needed rest and the wounded required attention. In most cases there were spoils to be divided, and the division was made as soon as convenient. The leader's eyes had been open to industry, willingness, and bravery. He noted or was soon told of the actions of his followers while in battle. Unless previously agreed otherwise, to the man who had excelled he allowed first choice of the horses to be divided. Each member of the party chose in turn according to his services as determined by the chief, the cook usually having high priority. The leader took his pick of what remained. The succession of choices was repeated in the same order as before. A reputation for fairness in dividing the spoils enhanced the prestige of a war leader and gained him followers. Liberality was

[21] *Ibid.*, 40.

[22] Informant: Yellowfish, see also Hoebel, *The Political Organization and Law-Ways of the Comanche Indians*, 25; C. and J. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, 34, 39, 40.

[23] Linton, *The Study of Man*, 142–43.

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under the tutelage of a man who possessed one, as in the case of the Shield group. They placed a tassel on their left shoulder and one in the hair, taking the Crow Tassel pledge to dedicate themselves to unceasing war. A man who had no surviving family or a man who had a family tradition with a fighting reputation to uphold might become a member. The members dedicated their lives to war. War was their business. They recognized no family ties of restraint. Loyalty to one another was a superior obligation. They fought and raided together as a unit. They pursued the war goal with such singleness of mind and purpose that they were apart from the larger society. Yet they were free to dissolve the band when they so desired. If they had been successful, when they dissolved the band, they became leading men in the community by virtue of their prestige.[28]

Among many of the Plains tribes there were "crazy" warriors who did everything backwards. The Cheyennes called them Contrary Ones; the Crow Indians, Crazy Dogs Wishing to Die. The Comanches, too, had a few of these men, called *pukutsi*.

Any man brave enough and desiring to do so could become a *pukutsi* on making up his mind, according to Frank Moeta. He carried a buffalo-scrotum rattle in his hand and would go about the camp singing, no matter what else might be going on. Everything he did was in inversion, but no one ever molested a *pukutsi*, because he was so recklessly brave.

He wore a long sash over his shoulder and rolled up under his arm. In battle, he rolled out his sash, stuck the free end into the ground with an arrow, and there took his stand. With bow in one hand and rattle in the other, he stood singing, tethered by his sash. He neither fought nor charged, but sang his songs until victory was won or death took him. Only a friend could come and free him. Should he give way in battle or release himself after the fight was done, the other warriors would taunt him in an attempt to egg him into an overt act against them so they could kill him.

There were not many of these men among the Comanches. Carrying Her Sunshade in all her long life knew only one. Of him she had the following story.

[28] Informant: Kills Something.

8: Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933) 1941 NO6 Comanche NO6

668 792 c) After Iʃatai had issued the call for the Sun Dance "which was widely heralded, and when the tribesmen assembled in May at a point on Red river near the agency boundary, every band was represented, several of them by almost one hundred percent of their people. . . . The great chiefs of the past had never been able to bring the scattered threads of the tribe together, but now a youthful warrior was about to accomplish that."[7]

d) The doctrine which Iʃatai preached was as follows:

a') The Caddoes, Wichitas and other tribes which had settled into reservation life were "going down hill fast" in numbers and well-being.

b') This was the fate in store for the Comanches if they heeded to the demands of the government.

c') But if they would turn to the war path and annihilate the Whites, then they would again become powerful and prosperous.

d') With his supernatural power he was empowered to cover all the warriors with immunity to bullets, and so he could guarantee the success of the venture against the Whites.[8]

619 e) Because of the violent tenor which the councils took, the pénətɛkə (Swift Stingers) band of Texas Comanches and a few other smaller groups withdrew and departed for home.

668 792 726 f) When the Sun Dance was finished he led a great war party of Comanches, accompanied by some Kiowas and Southern Cheyenes, south into Texas to wipe out the buffalo hunters who had their headquarters at Adobe Walls. There they came up against the new large caliber, long-range buffalo guns with which the professional buffalo hunters were equipped. The effect was disconcerting and disastrous. Iʃatai was discredited, and though he did not receive the horse-whipping that some of the warriors threatened, his influence as a prophet and leader was ended.[9]

g) But the fire Iʃatai had set was not yet burned out. Throughout that summer and the next year scores of murderous attacks were made upon white travelers and settlements throughout the southern plains. The result was to provoke determined military action and the abandonment of the Quaker Policy in Indian Affairs on the part of the United States. By 1875 the Comanches were militarily crushed, and that year "marks the end of their influence as a frontier factor of significance."[10]

So ended the Comanche experience with militant messianism in 1873–74.

668 171 In conclusion, attention may be called to the significance of these data for the question of North American prophet cults. Wallis[11] has summarized the materials which demonstrate a general and long-standing tendency to messianic attempts in this part of the aboriginal world. Spier, in proving the roots of the Ghost Dance in the Prophet Dance complex of the northwestern tribes, has laid stress upon the indigenous nature of regeneration of the dead in the cultures of that area.[12] The

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 374. [8] Hoebel, *Comanche Field Notes*, unpublished.
[9] Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 376. Also, Hoebel, *Comanche Field Notes.*
[10] Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 397.
[11] W. D. Wallis, *Messiahs: Christian and Pagan* (Boston, 1918), Chap. V.
[12] Spier, *op. cit., in toto.*

291 mournful fact, that much of it is obtained from those unfortunate individuals, who fall victims to their cupidity. They cut off the hair from the back 302 part of their heads, leaving it in front, the longer the better, and which they divide so as to bring it down from each temple, and to this they fasten any other that they can get, until it nearly reaches the feet. The savage who cut off mine, wore it in this way, and took frequent opportunity exultingly to remind me of it. But their cues with them are indispensable, and if they cannot obtain them in [237] one way, they will in another, and horse-hair answers in the room of better. They do [57] them up usually in strips of red and blue cloth, carefully winding it closely from the top to the extremity, with the red on one side, and the blue on the other. 301 To a small tuft of hair which they leave behind, is appended trinkets of the most trifling kind, such as old buttons, or any thing that will jingle, and on their arms and fingers they have a profusion of [726] rings of different kinds. Their ornaments are laid aside when they go out to war.

755 Their treatment of the sick is truly singular. When any of them, whether male or female, is considered to be seriously indisposed, they (the women) take all the grass and every other obstruction from a spot of ground sufficiently large to admit of the construction of two tents together; these are for the accommodation of friends. In the centre of the circle formed by the tent, they dig

175 Because of their courage in battle, the Comanches
726 even won, with certain reservations, the grudging respect of the Anglo-American settlers in Texas. After a fight in 1859, Captain E. K. Smith wrote that "the Comanches fought without giving or asking quarter until there was not one left to bend a bow, and would have won the admiration of every brave soldier of the command but for the intrusive reflection that they were the murderers of the wives and children of our frontiersmen, and the most wretched of thieves."[1]

175 The general outlines of Comanche history are well known. Members of the tribe first appeared in the
175 Spanish settlements of northern New Mexico soon
101 after 1700. Prior to that time they seem to have dwelled in the plateau and basin country west of the Rockies in parts of present Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. In those early years they apparently formed a single tribe with the Shoshones.

173 According to a native tradition, all the Shoshones were camped together along a river when the young son of a chief was accidentally killed during a kicking game. The incident stirred up bitter feelings, so that the camp broke into two factions. To avoid open hostilities, one group moved north, the Shoshones proper or Snakes, while the people who remained behind eventually drifted east and became the Comanches.

175 In the seventeenth century, the Comanches in
101 their several bands probably inhabited the parks just back of the Front Range in Colorado and the country as far as the valley of the North Platte. James

000

175 own service. It is known, for example, that the Co-
648 manches on raiding the plains of Durango, more
726 than once defeated Mexican troops in pitched
battles.

175 Riding down from the north in good order, the
701 Indians were organized under their own "generals"
177 and "captains" and in a number of cases even wore
articles of Spanish military apparel, gifts, no doubt,
175 of the authorities in Santa Fe. The entire question
of Comanche military organization during this period
is an intriguing one and deserves more study.

The details of Comanche history from 1820 to 1879, the period of conflict with the Anglo-Americans, are familiar to historians. From the accounts of Santa Fe traders, frontiersmen and scouts, and soldiers who fought in the last wars on the southern plains have come down to us a fairly sharp picture of the final days of the Comanche nation.

By contrast, the movements and activities of this great Indian tribe in the century and a quarter after 1700 remains, in considerable measure, a mystery. Some of what is known has been sketched above. A great deal more information, however, lies hidden in colonial documents, awaiting discovery by researchers. A start has been made, notably by Alfred B. Thomas, but much remains to be done.

The seven documents translated herein each throw small rays of light on obscure phases of Comanche history, providing clues to the tribe's relation both with the Spaniards and with neighboring Indian groups. Of particular interest is the summary of the treaty arranged with the Eastern Comanches in 1785

19: Lowie E-5 (1912) 1915 NO6 Comanche NO6

COMANCHE DANCES.

The dances of the Comanche seem to have been, at least to some extent, associated with their bands. These were purely local divisions that had nothing to do with the regulation of marriage. Of the fairly large number listed by Mr. Mooney,[1] my informants recollected only the following four bands:—

Yápaitɛ̀ka, Yampa-eaters, north of the other Comanche;

Kwā'are, Antelopes, in part of Oklahoma and Colorado, and the panhandle section of Texas;

Nókōni, or Nóyeka, Travelers, in the mountainous regions of Oklahoma;

Pɛ́natɛ̀ka, Honey, or Wasp-eaters, living toward the Rio Grande.

Of these bands, the Yápaitɛ̀ka is correlated with the Crow dance (tōwī nō'ō'kà); the Kwā'are, with the Colt (tírewō'ku-nō'ō'ka) and the Horse dance; the Nókōni and the Pénatɛ̀ka, with the swift-fox (wō'tsi[2] nō[ō]'ka) dance. The Buffalo dance (ā'anō'kà'r) was the common property of all the bands, but each band performed it by itself.

The only earlier account of Comanche dances known to me is by Clark. After listing the Swift Fox, Gourd, Raven, Buffalo Bull, and Afraid-of-Nothing societies, he states:—

> "The Comanche have five bands, and claimed that the difference is in the dances prior to getting up a war-party." In another place he writes: "The Comanches have the Raven, Buffalo Bull, Swift Fox,— all war-dances,— and Dance of Fear, with shields and lances, when they expect an attack; Turkey-Dance, imitating motions of turkeys. The Deer-Dance might be called the juggler's-dance, as the dancers pretend to swallow red beans and then draw them out through the breast."[3]

On the whole, I certainly received the impression that dances were, at least preferentially, associated with definite bands. One informant, however, denied any such correlation. According to him, the Comanche, in war times, were organised in different companies, which he compared with subdivisions of a regiment of soldiers. He enumerated the Crow, Fox, Drum, Big Horse, and Little Horse companies. If nothing unusual happened, a man would remain true to the division he had first chosen, but there was no special bond of friendship between members of the same company.

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[1] *Handbook of North American Indians*, article "Comanche."
[2] Another informant said this was a swift bird.
[3] Clark, 355, 141.

19: Lowie E-5 (1912) 1915 NO6 Comanche NO6

their drums. There was a strict rule, that no dog must run ahead of the performers lest it be shot; so women would bid their children take care of any dogs they prized. Sometimes, however, a man who specially liked his dog might be asked to sacrifice it on this occasion. This taboo may have been common to several groups of dancers, but dogs were certainly especially offensive to those of the Crow division.

During any of the dances the managers would threaten to strike laggards with clubs.

About the other dances I was only able to learn that the Horses and Little Horses wore buffalo-skin sashes that lacked the slit found elsewhere, and used rawhide rattles, decorated with yellow-hammer feathers; the Horses also had spears, trimmed with eagle feathers.

When the master of the nä'wapinàr had decided that the time for action had arrived, he caused the dancing to cease and had the Comanche prepare for the warpath. On the night before setting out the tribesmen assembled, coming in pairs toward the front and in single file behind. Then occurred the ceremony called nśotsäit'. The women brought a buffalo hide and sticks. Some men held up one side of the hide, while the women held the opposite side, and all belabored it with the sticks, a special song being intoned by the master alone and taken up by the rest.[1]

On the next day the Comanche started against the enemy, led by the master. They appointed scouts to determine the hostile tribe's position. On their return buffalo chips were piled up, and the leader went in front of the heap to sing a war song. The pile of chips represented a sort of oath to the effect that the enemy's camp was really situated in the place specified, and also marked a spot for the Comanche to return to. After a successful raid public thanks were rendered to those who had avenged the injury. Scalps were set on a pole and carried aloft by the main chief as he rode ahead on the return trip. His body was stripped to the waist and painted black. War songs were chanted and guns were discharged as the party came back. Those who had remained in camp saw the scalp and knew that the injury had been avenged.

A number of questions were asked to determine traces of typical elements of military societies as found among the Plains tribes. In reply to one of these queries I was told that some warriors had hooked sticks with a long spear point at the bottom, the bent part being decorated with two pairs of eagle feathers. I could not ascertain that these regalia were correlated with a special tribal division or dance. Again, I learned that there were

[1] This ceremony has been noted among the Nez Percé, Lemhi Shoshone, and Crow. The last-mentioned tribe borrowed it from the (Wind River) Shoshone.

20: Wallace H-4,5 (1945) 1953 NO6 Comanche NO6

dred Comanches were in military service. The people were proud of their young warriors and showered them with honors remarkably like the treatment accorded the warriors when they were the lords of the Southern Plains.

The love of pageantry creates a problem. The business-like course of white life deprives the Comanches of more of it than they like. This characteristic of the people is apparent at the annual Indian Exposition at Anadarko, a commercial show sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. The performance has little historical accuracy, but this does not offend the Indians. They are more concerned with the spirit of display than about historical authenticity. They will bankrupt themselves to get there, and then wear an unheard of costume with self-satisfaction. Any special occasion, as Christmas and July 4, affords opportunity for pageantry. Departing and returning warriors of World War II were honored with feasts, parades, and variations of the old-time war and victory dances.

The Comanches have always gotten a great deal of pleasure from social contacts. Today they tend to indulge in this type of pleasure at the expense of their work and obligations. Council meetings, ceremonies, and family consultations once brought the people together, but now decisions are made individually with white officials. The peyote ceremony was, in part, an attempt to satisfy the social urge.

At the close of a full life-span of time since they were compelled to give up their nomadic life, a few Comanches still sit and dream of past glories and of an untrammeled people who dwelt in an unmeasured wilderness. In retrospect they see once more the trooping warriors as they gallop toward the fray and hear their defiant whoops. They sit in the charmed circle of counsellors of the tribe. Of reservations and agents, of farms and towns, of railways and other innovations they grow forgetful. There will be some who will continue to dream until the end of life.

On the other hand, the Comanches as a group have long since ceased to roam, to strive for the old, or to dream.

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

[ca. 1818]

strip them in rude and vicious licentiousness. There are, however, some instances of tenacious sensibility, sufficient perhaps to redeem the species from this lamentable propensity to deterioration.

My next Letter will close the subject of the Comanchees.

B.

[*The Cincinnati Literary Gazette*, June 5, 1824]

Letter IV.

The Comanchees conduct all their military operations on horseback. So exclusively are they habituated to the cavalry mode of warfare, that to place them on foot would be in effect, to put them *hors de combat*, to render them totally inefficient. They are generally well mounted when on a hostile excursion, and are scarcely exceeded in the art of horsemanship, to which they are trained from early infancy. Both in war and hunting, they rely much on the speed of their horses, and are careful to select for their own use, the best and fleetest among their furtive herds.

The day previous to starting for war, the party militant parade through the village mounted and accountred, and bedaubed with paints, in their most gallant and frightful style. They march, or rather gallop in a line of single file, and have very few evolutions; but they contrive to give diversity and effect to their maneuvers, by frequent hideous yells, and antic gesticulations, which, combined with their wild and savage costume, give to the exhibition, if not a dreadful, at least a superlatively ludicrous appearance. Their habiliments on these occasions seem to be a motley assemblage of every rude and awkward device that can render their externals grotesque and terrific, or rather, to an informed spectator, fantastical and ridiculous.—A stranger might well imagine that he had gotten upon the parade ground of the Prince of Pandemonium: but an acquaintance with the real characters of the seemingly hideous spectres that shock and astound his vision, would convert the appalling spectacle into a scene of pantomimical foolery. These

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

[ca. 1818]

doughty warriors are much more terrible in appearance, than in reality; and such is generally the character of the southern Indians.

They always set out on their predatory adventures to the provinces with two creatures; a mule or inferior horse to perform the drudgery of the journey, and their favorite war-horse, who is carefully led, and kept fresh, and vigorous, until arriving in the vicinity of the intended object of attack. The most wary circumspection is then adopted in all their movements. A private encampment is formed, deep embosomed in the forest, where the fatigue horses, with the saddles and other baggage are deposited, in charge of a few men, and perhaps women, who often accompany their husbands on their military excursions, and answer all the purposes of grooms and menials. The more daring warriors sally out under cover of moon-light, from this secret rallying point, to reconnoitre the neighboring settlement in quest of prey. They so regulate their departure from home as to arrive at the intended place of assault about the full of the moon, and always make their attack at midnight. If they succeed in capturing a drove of mules and horses, they drive them with the utmost speed, night and day, until they cross the Rio Grande, beyond which they are seldom pursued. They frequently drive off a thousand head of these animals at one time; but many of them are destroyed on the way by crossing water-courses, or worn out by fatigue and abandoned to perish; or should they revive, to herd with the wild horses, numerous gangs of which roam through the country, where a perennial verdure affords them an abundant subsistence.

The number of mules and horses that these Indians capture annually from the Spaniards is immense, probably not less than 10,000, and perhaps the one half of these are destroyed, or left derelict, in the hurry and tumult of the homeward march.

The warriors, when they venture from their hiding-place, which they seldom do, except under favor of the Queen of Night, either to reconnoitre, or make an attack,

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

[ca. 1818]

always ride without saddles, and without any other encumbrance than the waist-cloth to their persons.—This lightness of apparel gives them a manifest advantage over their Spanish adversaries, whose horses are heavily caparisoned, and whose persons are embarrassed by a cumbrous load of accoutrements that partake more of the pomp, than the uses of war. Light shot guns, javelins, or lances, about 8 feet long, and bows and arrows compose their weapons. For defence they wear on the left wrist, a shield made of Buffaloes hide, consolidated when green by a process in which fire is the principal agent. They are made in an oval or circular form, about two feet in diameter, and presenting a surface slightly convexed. They are exceedingly tough, quite impenetrable to an arrow, and often so to the ball of a *scopete;* and they are light and easily disengaged from the arm in case of emergency. The loss of a shield does not attach an inexpiable disgrace to the character of a Comanchee warrior. They are comparatively novices in the use of fire-arms, and have an insuperable aversion to the weight of Rifles, but employ the bow and lance with great dexterity, and to a dispersed and retreating enemy, with destructive effect. The known capacity of their horses, and their minute acquaintance with the invaded country, which enables them generally to surprise the indolent and inert Spaniards, concurring with the miserable condition of the provinces for defense, inspire them with an artificial fearlessness, which invests them in the view of their ignorant and spiritless enemies, with the hideous horrors of the basilisk. But in truth, these horrors are imaginary: oppose them with decision and energy, and they will crouch like the Spaniel, or fly like the "stricken fawn."—They usually make what they term their grand campaign, once a year, either in the spring or fall season, when the three bands unite and co-operate in plundering and devastating the defenceless provinces that are contiguous to the Rio Grande. Besides these periodical invasions, the preparations for which, bear some resemblance to the pomp and circumstance of war, and the issues are frequently most disastrous to the exposed Provincials; there is a continual egress and

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

175 (ca. 1818)
721 regress of small parties from 5 to 50 in number, whose sole object is inglorious predation, and who cautiously avoid all renconters with the enemy, except with the menial herdsmen who attend the droves of the wealthy planters.

[171] [181] Although habitually savage and estranged from the humanizing influence of civilization, the Comanchee warriors are not so wantonly barbarous and sanguinary as many of the primitive nations of our continent. It is true, they 175 seldom give quarter to the Spanish soldiers, and it is equally 726 true, that they seldom receive any from them. It has been alleged too, that they massacre women and children. The charge is not true as to general practice, but there may be some isolated exceptions, growing out of pressing emergency 175 or some extraordinary excitement. When reproved on this 721 awful subject, these undisciplined warriors justify their deeds of horror, as more enlightened nations have attempted to justify theirs, by the law of retaliation: and I suspect that a strict investigation would evince but little disparity in the inhumanities that are reciprocally practiced by these savage and semi-savage belligerents.

175 The Comanchees are always at war with the Osages and 721 Pawnees. A formal declaration has perhaps never tran- 648 spired, but whenever they meet, hostilities ensue. Frequent and sometimes sanguinary recontres happen between them, 175 the Osages and Pawnees being in general the aggressors. In the fall of the year these tribes abandon their villages, and 721 lead a wandering life, ostensibly for the purpose of hunting. They often roam as far as the Comanchee region, professedly in quest of Buffalo, but in reality to "spoil the spoiler of his prey," in which they frequently succeed so far as to return well mounted, although they always leave home on foot. The Comanchees sometimes retaliate upon them by carrying the war into their country; but having little to gain by these excursions, they are unfrequent. Simple bootless war, has few attractions for a people who have neither poets nor historians to perpetuate the fame of their achievements.

175 Strong attachment to kindred is a prominent feature in
152

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca. 1870]

The husband may repudiate his wife or wives at any time, and take back his presents. The wife too, for some causes, may rebel against her tyrant lord, and leave off serving him. This course on the part of a Comanche wife, covers the husband with such disgrace that it can only be removed by killing someone—the first person he may happen to meet is made the victim. It nearly always happens that he first meets with his truant wife, or some near friend of hers, first after suffering the great disgrace, and, of course, he proceeds to slay her, or the vicarious relative.

IF THE COMANCHE can be said to live under any government, it may be set down as a radical democracy. The war chiefs are elected, on occasions of war, by the council of warriors. Their authority is only countenanced and their commands obeyed while hostilities continue. In peace, their authority is merely that derived from their wealth and prowess. The Comanches honor courage and skill in war, and the successful warrior is generally made a chief of some band. There is no unity in the tribe. Besides the seven sub-tribes into which they are divided, each of the seven is made up of small parties, each of which has a leader. In many respects the autonomy of the Comanche tribe differs from any other North American Indians. In most respects, the tribal government is very much the same as found among Xicarillo, Mescaleros, and other wandering Apaches, to which family it is claimed they are nearly related. But in two or three important particulars their method or system of government is entirely distinct from and wholly unlike that of any other people.

When a chief or prominent warrior wishes to organize a warlike expedition, he takes his yellow shield, puts on his eagle plumes, smears war-paint over his face, and assuming the weapons borne by warriors, he rides at a furious pace among the lodges, chanting his war-song as he goes. Any warrior who has taken two scalps may thus organize a marauding expedition, and no authority of chiefs or councils can prevent it. If there are warriors willing to join him they immediately mount their ponies, armed and equipped, and follow the warrior, who first declared war. Their chant is united with his, and thus a war party is made up. But it is not often that the entire band declares for war. The promoter of the war may be a simple warrior, without any authority whatever. For that particular expedition he may be chosen chief, or they may select another to lead them. When going against an enemy the commands of the chiefs are generally obeyed with alacrity. In peaceful seasons they have virtually no chief, or rather every venerable warrior among them is a chief, whose

23: Cabello y Robles G-3 (1778-1786) 1961
NO6 Comanche NO6
Eastern Comanche

(ca. 1786)

nor of Texas a number of questions about this tribe. A translation of Governor's Cabello's reply follows:

Domingo Cabello: "Answers that the Governor of the Province of Texas Gave to the Questions that the Señor Commandant-General of the Interior [Provinces] asked in a letter dated January 27, 1786, about various circumstances of the Eastern Comanche Indians," April 30, 1786, Bexar Archives.

FIRST: About Their Customs.

According to what is known about this Nation, it is the most brave and warlike of those [tribes] that inhabit the North; and when they have friendship they are very friendly and of a generous mood, and friends of their friends, although delicate in the mode with which they make friendship. They adore very much the skins of animals which they customarily bring with them, and which they fasten on themselves during the encounters of war, so that they will not be killed or wounded in any manner; and if any misfortune befall them, they attribute it to having given some offense to this specie of idol, such as not having offered it food or the smoke (*humo*) of tobacco each time they smoke (*fuman*), or that women have defiled the ceremonies which they make use of when they take the pipe in hand. Some devote themselves in this manner to adoring a buffalo hide, others to that of the bear, others to the otter, and others to that of some birds, whose skin, still with its feathers, they use to adorn themselves. Their marriages they celebrate with as many women as they are able to maintain; if someone distinguishes himself in bravery and in actions made against his enemies, or something of a similar nature, some fathers give him even of their daughters, and it is the custom many times for him to marry with the sisters [of his wife]; husbands maintain their women with the buffalo and deer which they hunt; [the women] are obliged to work the meat and [prepare] the hides of the said animals. [The husbands] are so extremely jealous that for very trifling motives they kill their women; furthermore, when these mild ones give occasion for it, the husbands treat them with much blindness and harshness, as if they were slaves.

28: Thomas H-4 (no date) 1962 NO6 Comanche NO6
(1786)

"The only earlier account of Comanche dances known to me is by Clark. After listing the Swift Fox, Gourd, Raven, Buffalo Bull, and Afraid-of-Nothing societies, he states:

> The Comanche had five bands, and claimed that the difference is in the dances prior to getting up a war-party.

In another place he adds:

> The Comanches have the Raven, Buffalo Bull, Swift-Fox,-all-war dances and Dance of Fear, with shields and lances, when they expect an attack . . . . ."[11]

It is perhaps significant that the bands number five, since five, as is well known, is the pattern number of some of the Basin Shoshoneans.

With regard to the "f" shaped figures in the reproduction here, it has been suggested[12] to the writer that possibly these are crooked lances which are badges of office common to the various military societies found among the Plains Indians generally.[13] Hooked lances as noted by Lowie were among the Comanche typical elements in their military societies:

> A number of questions were asked to determine traces of typical elements of militatry societies as found among the Plains tribes. In reply to one of these queries I was told that some warriors had hooked sticks with a long spear point at the bottom, the bent part being decorated with two pairs of eagle feathers. I could not ascertain that these regalia were correlated with a special tribal division or dance.[14]

In the case of the Wind River Shoshoni, the hooked sticks, Lowie learned, were used to catch fleeing enemies:

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[11] R. H. Lowie, Dances and Societies of the Plains Shoshone. Anthr. Pap. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., 11: 809.

[12] The suggestion is Dr. Spier's.

[13] Lowie, Dances and Societies of the Plains Shoshone, (Comanche), 811; (Kiowa), 847 f; (Cheyenne) Kit Fox Society, 896. J. R. Murie, Pawnee Indian Societies. Anthr. Pap. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., v. 11 (Pawnee; Two Lance Society, 561; Red Lance Society, 567; Thunderbird Lance, 570; Crow Lance, 571; Brave Raven Society, 574; Fighting Lance, 576; Wolf Lance, 576; Blackhead Lance, 576; Knife Lance, 578). A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. Bull., 18: 159, 1904.

[14] Lowie, Dances and Societies of the Plains Shoshone, 809–811.

28: Thomas H-4 (no date) 1962 NO6 Comanche NO6
(1786)

Tosaporua:	Oso blanco, de la Rama Yamparica:[24]	White Bear, of the Yamparica branch	8
Pasahuoques:	Ladra Ronco, Idm:	Hoarse Bark, Idm.	20
	Fourth led by Tosapoy		
Ysaquebera:	Lobo Largo, Yupe:	Long Wolf, Yupe[25]	80
Tuchubarua:	Hozo Paxarito, Idm:	Bear Bird, Idm.	9
Encantime:	Savandija, Idm:	Beetle, Idm.	11
	Fifth led by Paraginachi		
Pagabipo:	Vasija de Panza, Yamparica:	Basin Pauch, Yamparica.	15
Cunabunit:	El que vió Fuego, Ydm:	He who saw Fire, Idm.	10
Quahuabacante:	Cuero matado:	Dead Hide	8
		Total	593

NOTE

The number of individuals whom they have at their command exceeds at least by a third part that computed by this statement.[26]

. . . . . .[26]

It is a certified copy. Janos 13 of March 1788 in accordance with the order of the Senor Commandante General.

Juan Gasiot y Miralles (Rubric)

FOURTH ENCLOSURE[28]

Names of twenty-two other Comanche despatched by Equeracapa to Governor Don Juan Bautista de Anza in place of eight whom he asked for

[24] Yamparica, Anza stated, comes from the word Yampa, a species of sweet root which abounds in the country of these Indians (Relacion, paragraph 2).

[25] The word Yupe is also written by the Spaniards, Yupinis and Gente de Palo. The latter may be translated as Stick People or Timber People. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Council, mentioned in this Noticia, which selected Equeracapa as chief of all the Comanche, met on the Arkansas river in a spot called La Casa de Palo or the House of Timber or Stick (Relacion, paragraph 2).

[26] It will be observed that this note is apparently a restatement of the last phrase of the opening paragraph of this Noticia that each tent has about three men of arms. The total number of warriors would accordingly be between seventeen hundred and eighteen hundred.

[28] A list of five chiefs' names, all appearing on the Tally Sheet is omitted here since the Spanish equivalents are not given. Of these five names, three, Salambipu, Encajive, and Piaquegipe, do not appear in the lists of the Noticia or the Fourth Enclosure so that their meanings are unknown.

[28] This list of twenty-two names is a fourth enclosure accompanying the Relacion. The other three enclosures as already noted are a copy of the Tally Sheet, the Noticia, and the Yнforme of Ortiz. (See footnotes 4, 7, and 21 above.)

28: Thomas H-4 (no date) 1962 NO6 Comanche NO6
(1786)

175 701 648 726 to accompany the detachment of the campaign of the month of July for the purpose of informing themselves of the lands and situation of the enemies in the sierras of the Rio Grande del Norte in order to be able to guide the parties of their nation, which in effect, they did. They conducted themselves with the greatest valor and fidelity in two encounters which they had, having succeeded in the first in taking fourteen prisoners, and in the second, killing three men from a large rancheria of Apache which they attacked themselves alone, because they were ahead of the detachment and came upon a trail along which they went and arrived at it (the rancheria) before the troops.

175 701 551

Capitan Oxamaquea:	Manos Amarillas, hixo mayor del expresado Gral: Yellow Hands, eldest son of the above mentioned Chief.	
Tomanaguene:	Alzo las manos, hijo Segundo: He raises his hands; second son	
Tahuichimpia:	El Suegro, hijo tercero: Father-in-law, third son: This one was with the Governor, sent previously by his father.	
Tosaporua:	Oso blanco:	White Bear
Camquencavite:	Casa Colorada:	Red House
Quemanacare:	El que esta lejos:	He who was far away
Quetampunigue:	El que no han Visto tirado:	He whom they have not seen shot
Nomasonasallo:	El que hizo su saco:	He who made his sack.
Huillome:	El Alezna:	The Awl
Ancachouate:	Hasta sinpunta:	Even without purpose
Tampiallanenque:	Risa grande:	Great Laugh
Sucaque:	Que cosa és:	What is it
Tanansimu:	El Sarsillo:	Small Rake
Amabate:	El sin Caveza:	The One without a head
Tanticanque:	El que come	He who eats
Ybienca:	Muger Colorado	Red Woman
Ecopisura:	Cuchara Arrastrada	Scraping Spoon
Parnaquibitiste:	Oso muy pequeño:	Very small bear
Taoinan:	El Flauta	The Flute
Humavaenvite:	El Gavilan Roxo	The Red Sparrow-Hawk
Tamavencaniguay:	El preguntado por el Anillo:	The One questioned because of the Ring.[a]
Cageneiqueuate:	El Sin Faja	The One without a Sash.[b]

175 It is a copy which I certify. Janos 13 of March, 1788. By virtue of an order of the Senor Commandante General.

Juan Gasiot y Miralles (Rubric)

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA,
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

[a] The Spanish here admits of another translation: "The one asked for the Ring" might be equally correct. This statement applies to several other of the above names so that the correct meaning must necessarily await comparison with the Comanche language itself.

[b] Another word may be added to this list: Encatabebo: Vermejo: The Bright Red One. This name was that of the Comanche chief who [illegible] with Ortiz. (See footnote 7 above.)

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

123 stead of just another Indian customer of the store. He was to live thirty-eight more years, and the friendship beginning that day continued to the end. Often there was a stretch of years between our meetings, but when we did meet we made up for lost time. And over the years I came to know him as the man who, I believe, did more to bring about an amicable relationship between our two races than any other man, Indian or white.

551 The Comanche Agency roll gives Che-appy (pronounced Ce-Pa, with a soft C and the accent on the first syllable), the Indian name under which Charley Ross was listed, the birth year of 1863. This means that in 1875, when the roll was compiled, a government clerk considered that he appeared to be twelve years old. His father's name
736 is given as To-wa, and his mother's as Wer-e-kah. No birth years are given for either the father or the mother, nor is there any record of their death. But four or five years later Che-appy is listed as an orphan, and he may well have been an orphan at the time of his enrollment. This means that his father left no surviving brother or blood
[597] brother. Had there been such an uncle, Che-appy would have become his son, and thus not an orphan. As to the manner of the father's death, we know only that Charley Ross's daughter Ida (now Mrs. Phil Cato of Riverside, California) is sure that her grandfather was not killed while fighting.

131 Che-appy was born during the last years of the Comanche empire, Comanchería, which stretched from the Arkansas River to the north and the Cross Timbers to the east to the varying southern and western boundaries formed by the range of the southern herd of buffalo,
726 whose guardians the Comanches considered themselves to be. Nothing
648 is definitely known of his early childhood, but it is probable that he was held prisoner, as were most Comanche women and children, during the all-out effort of the Army to subdue the Comanches following the battle of Adobe Walls and until the final surrender in 1875. While this relentless warfare was being waged against the Comanche, on an around-the-clock basis, twelve months of the year, with at times as many as five columns of troops in the field, every horse and mule belonging to the Indians was shot and killed as soon as it was captured, to prevent its recapture. Following the engagement at Palo Duro Canyon, the Army slaughtered 1,400 head of Comanche horses and mules. Then, when the Army wanted to move the captured women and children to the reservation, it had no transportation for

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them. Everyone who was able was required to walk. An old friend of 648
mine, Wer-que-yah, if he was in the mood and was properly urged, 726
would relate how he, along with many others, including Peet-so, the
girl he later married, walked several hundred miles to Fort Sill, in the
winter. While this was going on, the hide hunters, with the Army's
blessing, were destroying the remnant of the buffalo.

This was Che-appy's childhood background. The first that is defi- 657
nitely known about him, after his appearance on the tribal roll, con- 871
cerns his presence at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, which
was established in 1879 by General (then Captain) Richard H. Pratt.
Norman G. Holmes, area tribal relations officer of the Anadarko
Agency, has found letters and copies of letters that passed between
Superintendent Pratt and others at Carlisle and the Indian agent at
Fort Sill, whose name was Hunt. One letter to Hunt, dated April 18,
1883, signed by H. Price, states that during the following summer
certain pupils, among whom was "Cheapie Ross," would complete
the three-year period for which they had been sent to Carlisle. This
would mean that Charley Ross began his schooling in the fall of 1880,
the beginning of the second year of the school's existence.

The majority of the children in the first student body had been
Northern Sioux. Washington officials insisted that Pratt take part of
his students from this source, so that they would be hostages against
another outbreak of the Sioux. He personally secured 84 Sioux chil-
dren. He then sent three emissaries into the Southwest, and also wrote
to various agents there. This effort netted him 52 more students, bring-
ing the total to 136—16 more than had been authorized by the order
establishing the school.

For some time I wondered why other Comanches in our trade terri- 191
tory who were about the same age as Charley could not speak English 871
and had not been to school. Among them was Charley's brother-in- 657
law To-pet-chy, Yok-so-wy, Coffee, and Wer-que-yah, of whom I
have spoken. The next oldest Indian I knew who spoke English was
Andrew Per-da-sof-pa, who was about ten years younger. His sister 657
and a brother also went to Carlisle. One reason for the gap is, I be- 871
lieve, that when Carlisle was first opened it was too soon after the
surrender for teen-age Comanche children to trust themselves to a
school run by the white man's army, and especially by one of the
officers who had been leading the fight against them. Then too, Gen-
eral Pratt took only fifty-two students from the Southwest area in

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157 Ca-vo-yo, who was one of the first of the old chaps to become an individual to me, was such a friendly, kindly old fellow that it was hard for me to picture him riding into battle, screaming his war cry. But by the agency's record he must have been a successful and respected warrior for approximately twenty years. Had he not been a [553] [555] successful warrior, none would have sought him out to name their man-child and give of his medicine.

778 [114] I have tried a number of times to write Ca-vo-yo's story as a giver of names, but the trouble always is that scarcely have you begun to write about the giving of a name, when you run into *Pa-haw-cut*, the Comanche name for medicine. And it is hard to tell a white audience about Comanche medicine, because the white man has nothing through which he can identify with the Comanche's feeling about it. I thought at one time of creating a straw man by combining an individual who by faith had a guardian angel with one who believed his destiny was directed by the stars and their positions, and then to this composite individual adding one who believed in luck—one who would not leave his home for the office of a morning without his good luck charm. Then I decided that the faith of even such an individual would still fall far short of a Comanche's faith in his medicine.

[555] When a Comanche warrior was bragging, to an audience gathered around a campfire, of some mighty coup he had brought about, he was not bragging of a personal exploit—he was telling about the 701 strength of his medicine. From the earliest war games he played as a boy, throughout his active adult life, he was constantly training himself to be ever a better warrior. It was his way of life. Also, he sought to perfect himself in the making of arms, both for war and for the hunt. Each warrior furnished his own arms. We have a written history, more or less, for the last 175 years of Comanche warfare, which shows that the Comanche possessed neither an armory nor a commissary.

492 411 224 Just as he had one set of arrows for war and another set of arrows he used in the killing of the buffalo, so the Comanche had horses trained for war and horses trained to carry him alongside the buffalo, 778 so he could loose an arrow into the rib cage of his huge quarry. But 726 492 it was his individual *Pa-haw-cut*, or medicine, that allowed him to count coup early and often in the battle—that caused his horse to carry him at full speed into battle and to carry him away in a stra- 778 492 224 tegic retreat. The same medicine allowed his horse to place him beside

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the stampeding buffalo without stepping into a grass-covered badger or prairie-dog hole.

It was his medicine that enabled him to crawl into a cavalry bivouac and sever the eight-foot rope that each soldier had tied to his wrist, so his horse might graze safely during the night, and without waking the sleeper or his comrades lead the horse away.

It was his medicine that caused his wives to be friendly and congenial, one with the other. It resulted in the wives' caring for his camp, looking after his surplus horses, and bearing mostly boy babies. For none of these things did he take credit personally. But he was justly proud of his medicine that had brought all these things about, and he guarded it like a jealous lover.

To sum up the attributes of a name-giver: he needed a keen ear and an extensive knowledge of the vocabulary—perhaps a sense of humor helped—and he must have a successful reputation as a warrior-hunter and a willingness to share his medicine. Custom required him to give each individual named a supply of his medicine. Warriors often refused to give a name because it meant parting with a portion of their medicine. They feared the remainder might prove inadequate. Apparently the true name-giver's supply had a similarity to the oil in the cruse and the meal in the barrel of the widow at Zarepath, while she fed the fugitive Elijah. It was replenished as used.

My reading indicates that the Comanche placed more emphasis or dependence on the name than did any of the other Plains tribes. A warrior might carry a number of names, should he live a long and successful life. In the event a boy developed into a sickly youngster, or was accident-prone, his parents were apt to seek out one reputed to have even stronger medicine than the one who gave him the first name and ask for another name. Directly after puberty when a youth went alone to fast and pray for a vision, should his vision have particular significance, he would be given a name in keeping with the vision. But no Comanche dared name himself.

After his acceptance as a warrior, should he develop outstanding characteristics in methods, strategy, or bravery, he might be given yet another name, descriptive of his accomplishments. For example, there was the Mexican captive Mo-cho-rook, about whom I tell in another chapter. Raised and trained as a Comanche warrior, he was given this name because "he so cruel, he makes Comanche blood run cold." He became a legend while yet he lived.

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553 562a Little significance attached to a girl's name. Often she was given pet name by her mother at birth and probably not given a real name for several years. Once named, she carried that name for the rest of her life, even after her marriage.

115 Much of my information concerning Ca-vo-yo and name-giving came from Charley Ross, who in turn had received much of his information from his father, To-wa, and his father-in-law, Mi-he-suah, whom we called Mi-so. They and Ca-vo-yo were approximately the 726 same age, and the three had been young warriors together. Mi-so was wounded during the first charge at Adobe Walls. With a buffalo-gun slug in his abdomen he lay all day quite near the Walls without moving, knowing that should the defenders detect any movement they would finish the job. He was rescued near evening by two mounted warriors, who, riding at full speed, picked him up, laid him across the horse in front of one of the riders, and rode out of range without being hit.

552 177 Once Charley told me of a service Ca-vo-yo rendered the older Indians who knew no English. I think I remember it almost word for word, and so I will give it as a quotation. "When the white man came to live among the Comanches, here in Comanche land, he brought many things and customs the older Indians had never seen and knew nothing about. The old men went to Ca-vo-yo, and he gave them a Comanche name for each such article and custom. The words he gave them had a particular significance for the article or customs and were easily remembered."

Then Charley gave a little laugh, a sort of chuckle, and went on, "Many old Indians had never seen a completely bald man until they saw your father, so he gave him the name Ka-hait-ze Paph. *Ka-hait-ze* is 'without'; *paph* means 'hair' or 'head.'"

000 I carry three vivid mental images of Ca-vo-yo. One is really a 342 composite image. He lived in a little T-shaped box house that sits on the east bank of West Cache Creek, right where Blue Beaver Creek 609 adds itself to the larger stream. Soon the white people who lived to the east of the creek wanted another ford. They wanted a single ford to take the place of the fords across each creek, a mile upstream. So Ca-vo-yo allowed them to construct a ford just back of his house and only feet below the junction of the two creeks. To use this new ford you had to open and close two gates, as you let yourself through his horse corral.

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no one to compare him with, white or Indian. He was as unique as a new day dawning to the east of the slightly undulating prairie he loved.

He was born into the Comanche stone-age society, probably in 1861 or '62. Their great inland empire, Comanchería, was still intact. History testifies that it had been theirs for 150 years. But that was only the length of time the white man had known the Comanche. From 1700, their ownership stretches back into the dimness of conjecture. Some anthropologists tell us the Comanche had been a separate and distinct tribe for a thousand years when the white man first met him. In any case, in 1861 Comanchería, more than six hundred miles north and south and almost as wide in places, contained thousands of horses to be captured and claimed and millions of buffalo, deer, and antelope for the Comanche's food.

But when the Civil War ended in 1865, a great horde of restless men was released by both armies. Nearly all craved land. Each wanted a home of his own, a place to grow and expand. The Comanche, other plains tribes, and the buffalo were in their road. Comanchería and the horse buffalo culture came to an end.

Sometimes Wer-que-yah would talk a little of when the Comanche world ended for him. Somewhere, out on the Comanche prairie, in what the white man had labeled the Texas Panhandle, his group was overrun by the Army. The unwounded warriors escaped, but the wounded, the aged, and the women and children were captured and taken to Fort Sill.

The Comanche Family Record Book at Anadarko, Oklahoma, indicates that Wer-que-yah would have been fourteen, and the girl he afterward married, Peet-So, six years old at the time of their capture. This would have been in the last half of 1874 or the first half of '75.

Lieutenant General P. H. Sheridan, commander of the Army in the Middle West, was determined to bring the Indian wars to an end, once and for all. He secured President Grant's consent to place the Army of the Southwest on a twelve months a year, all-out war basis. Provisions for such an effort were assembled, including grain and forage for the horses and mules, and five columns were ordered into the field.

Lieutenant Colonel J. N. Davidson was ordered west out of Fort Sill. He commanded six troops of the 10th Cavalry, three companies of the 11th Infantry, two howitzers, and eighty-five newly recruited

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Indian scouts. The scouts were recruited and commanded by Captain Richard H. Pratt (the same Captain Pratt who, a few years later, was to organize the Indian school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and who remained its superintendent for eighteen years, trying to turn Indian youths into imitation white men).

Colonel G. P. Buell advanced from Fort Griffin. Colonel R. S. MacKenzie marched from Fort Concho. Colonel Nelson A. Miles took the field from Fort Supply. Major William Price came eastward from Fort Bascum in New Mexico. Captain Pratt and his scouts, using pack animals to carry supplies, operated at times as a sixth unit.

General Sheridan's idea was to keep the Indians on the move so continuously that their grass-fed horses wouldn't have time to graze, nor would the Indians be able to replenish their commissary from game. (In 1874 there were buffalo on the high plains, but the white hide-hunters were rapidly bringing about their extinction.) A tracing of the movements of the different Army columns as they pursued the Indians, taken from their reports, shows their trails crossing and recrossing one another, sometimes doubling back, much like lizard tracks in the sand.

There were a number of incidents in which the Army captured numbers of women and children. I have never been able to determine to my own satisfaction which group Wer-que-yah and Peet-so were in. About the only difference it would make would be in the distance they had to walk to reach Fort Sill.

Some Army reports set out the problems incurred when such captures were made. The column had to be regrouped and a force sent back with the captives, sufficient to make sure that they would not escape or be rescued by the Indians. Medical personnel and medical supplies must be part of the returning column. Food must be taken along for both soldiers and prisoners. Wagons must be detached from the main force to haul the food, forage and grain for horses and mules, and such of the prisoners as were unable to walk. This included the wounded, aged, women with newborn babies, and children too young to walk. Wer-que-yah assured us that Peet-so walked the whole distance. There were no roads, no ferries or bridges. Streams must be waded, regardless of the weather or time of year. One thing that should be noted: the Army reports mention wounded women in some instances. Many of them fought with their men in the battles.

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The wounded were cared for by an army doctor, and the prisoners were fed army rations on the long walk back to Fort Sill. Once they arrived, the prisoners were placed in a guarded prison camp. They were given tents to live in and army blankets to sleep under, and were issued regular army food rations. They fared much better than the Reservation Indians, who were living on the bounty of the Indian Department. Captain Pratt, in his book, *Battlefield and Classroom*, says the Reservation Indians protested strenuously. He wrote letters to Washington, interceding for better supplies for the peaceful Indians. When the warriors were captured, or surrendered, and returned to the post, they found their women and children healthy and well fed.

Wer-que-yah became one of our first Indian customers when we opened our trading store at Old Faxen, Oklahoma Territory. We had the name Wek-wa-a for him, and that is the name under which we carried his account when Dad extended him credit to the next Grass Payment.

Perhaps "Grass Payment" needs some explanation. As soon as Quanah Parker was named chief of the Comanches by the Indian Department, Texas cattlemen began leasing graze from him at ten cents an acre. Mesquite grass and grama grass were the principal grasses. Both are members of the cane family. Tasty and flesh-building when in the growing stage, they store up sugar when matured on the stem. Stock eat and thrive on this ripe grass, and during an open winter will stay in excellent flesh. That is to say, the grasses are a twelve months' graze.

Later, the Indian Department took over the leasing of the grass and raised the price to fifty cents per acre. This lease money was distributed to the Indians on a per capita basis. It was explained to them that this payment differed from the issue of food and clothing they had received from time to time; that was pay for the grass the white man's cows were eating—or Grass Money.

This was language all Indians could understand, and the name caught on. Later, when their land was sold and the interest on their money, held in trust by the government, was distributed twice a year, it remained Grass Money as far as the older Indians were concerned. After food, beeves, and clothing were no longer issued, Grass Money and rent from their allotments were the Indians' only income.